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BOSTON GRAMMAR AND WRITING SCHOOLS.

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In the same manner let him, as he commits to memory the definitions of gender, number, case, mood, tense, &c., learn at the same time to apply them to examples written by himself or the teacher. The next step is to teach the pupil to attach an object to a verb, and thus learn the distinction between the objective and nominative cases, transitive and intransitive verbs.

Let him then, after learning the definition of a preposition, attach to the verb or noun, a preposition and its object, thus, "the bird flies through the air," and then explain the relation of the whole phrase "*through the air*" to the verb. The next step is to construct compound sentences, and make the proposed distinction between the principal and dependent clauses with their connectives.

In this way the pupil's memory is not cumbered with a variety of rules and definitions, while he is unacquainted with their use and application.

The scholar may now take sentences already formed and learn to analyze them into their various parts. Then, by uniting the two processes of constructing and analyzing, the pupil, under the guidance of a skilful teacher, will necessarily, and with pleasure to himself, become acquainted with the principles of grammar.

This process requires, on the part of the teacher and pupil, labor and patience and perseverance; but it has this recommendation, the mind is exercised, and every step taken is an advance toward the accomplishment of the object.

Of all the branches taught in our schools, reading seems to receive the greatest attention on the part of the masters. The attainments of the pupils in this branch, are incomparably higher than in any other. Your committee apprehend, indeed, that in some schools too high value is attached to it, and that time and labor are spent upon it to the neglect of other studies.

The art of reading well is a beautiful and important one; but it must not be forgotten that it is a means to an end, and not

the great end itself. The first object in teaching reading should be, to make the scholar so familiar with the arbitrary visible signs of things and ideas, that a single glance at a sentence shall make him acquainted with its full meaning; he must be able to dispense with the aid which is necessary to those unfamiliar with the signs, of moving his lips, or *saying to himself* the words he looks upon. The second object should be, to enable the learner to enunciate those signs correctly, distinctly and euphoniously,—in short, to read aloud. Now it is very easy to learn the first part of the art without learning the second, as is illustrated in the common remark that one can read French, but cannot speak or pronounce it; but it is very hard, if it be not impossible, to attain the second part without the first,—to pronounce the signs, without understanding their meaning; yet some of our Boston masters, by their art and perseverance, and by the extraordinary powers of imitation and memory in their pupils, do approach success even in this, which is somewhat like being able to pronounce correctly an unknown tongue.

Your committee have sometimes been amazed to find that pupils could read, with tolerable emphasis, tone and feeling, whole stanzas, of which they did not understand the metaphors, the leading ideas, or the principal words.

Much as has been said by former committees, much as has been written in every treatise on education, about the importance of teaching scholars the meaning of every word they read, we believe the lesson has not been learned by all our masters, much less by their pupils; and we fear it never will be learned while the present inefficient and imperfect mode of superintendence and examination is continued.

The first and great object, then, of learning to read,—an understanding of the language,—is often sacrificed to the second,—euphonious enunciation of sound; and for this there is great temptation held out to the masters and great inducements to the scholars. Every casual visiter of a school must hear a reading lesson, but only a few venture to question the readers; every committee must hear the class read, whether they have time to examine in grammar or not.

Your committee would by no means undervalue the importance of the elocutionary part of reading. They would not have the masters overvalue it, as some do, but surely not all, judging from the careless and slipshod reading of their classes. There is the greatest possible difference in this respect in our schools; a difference that could hardly exist under good supervision.

We should venture to offer some remarks upon the other branches of study pursued in our schools, if we had space for them. If it is thought that we insist too strongly that the children should *understand* what they study, and if it is said that this cannot be perfectly accomplished, we answer, that we do not demand the impossible. But much more is done in this way in some schools than in others; more should be done in all; and those who have not had some opportunity of witnessing *actual results*, would be surprised at the degree to which the understanding of children may be developed, and at the facility

with which they may be made to comprehend the facts and rules they learn, by vigilant, skilful and persevering efforts.

Upon the whole, the committee have, reluctantly, come to the conclusion that the Grammar Schools of Boston have not the excellence and usefulness they should possess. Our citizens manifest their strong desire that their children should have the best possible education, by a very liberal expenditure for this purpose; and it is certain that their children have not this education. We cannot but believe, for we see, that other schools are better than most of ours; and that the majority of our schools are further below the best that we have, than anything in the peculiar condition of the scholars, or other similar causes, can explain. And your committee do not think they should discharge their duty, if they did not suggest some, at least, of the causes which seem to them to operate unfavorably upon our schools.

The first of these causes may be found in the constitution of the School Committee. Numerous, chosen without concert, in many different parts of the city, offering to those of its members who cannot turn it to their pecuniary benefit, no motive but the mere love of usefulness to induce them to remain long in office, it is, necessarily, an uncertain, fluctuating and inexperienced body. The duties which its members ought to discharge, are burdensome, and would require great labor, and occupy a large portion of our time. The duties which we do perform, though quite as much as can be expected or ought to be asked of men who give to these duties only their leisure, and give it without compensation, are but a very small part of those which lie upon us.

Nor is it possible for us to perform even these as they should be performed. The schools are divided among sub-committees. Each sub-committee consisting of three members, the whole number for the nineteen Grammar Schools is fifty-seven. And as only twenty-four members serve on the sub-committees, it is obvious that each member must serve on two schools, and nine must serve on three. The sub-committees are required to visit each school, at least once a quarter. We do full justice to their actual labors, when we assume that this rule is complied with, and that the required visit occupies a whole day, which is employed in a careful examination of a school of 400 or 500 children. Now, not to dwell at present upon the necessary insufficiency of so brief an examination, we would ask attention to one inevitable result from this practice. It is, that all the schools are not examined by any sub-committee, as each member confines himself to his own two, or at most three schools. Of the annual examination, we will speak presently. That which is made by the regular sub-committees, never, by any possibility, subjects all the schools to the same standard. It never ascertains their comparative merits. It provides no means by which improvements that are of great service in one school, may be adopted in another; none by which the example of one school may be made profitable to another; and the greatest and most unnecessary difference may remain for years,

in schools almost in sight of each other. In fact, no one man, and no sub-committee, is ever required or expected to know the actual condition of all the Grammar Schools in Boston.

It may be said that the Annual Examining Committees do this. We know something of the toils which that committee must undergo, if they discharge any tolerable part of their most important duties. We know what we have done ourselves, and at what expense of time and labor. We have inquired diligently into the doings of our predecessors, and examined the records they have left. And we say quite enough when we assert, that the labor of a faithful sub-committee has very seldom exceeded a full day to each school, spent in its careful examination. This seems to be the most ever asked or expected. Now, let us compare what is to be done, and the time in which it is to be done. There are two committees, of three each; one to examine the writing department, and one for the grammar department. These committees are to ascertain the whole condition of the school, and all the particulars which make up this whole,—the proficiency of the scholars in each department; the methods of instruction in each branch of study; the discipline and motive-powers relied upon; the character, demeanor and abilities of the masters, ushers and assistants, and this so well as to judge whether their defects or errors are curable, and if so, by what suggestions or advice most effectually; the state of the schoolroom, its furniture and apparatus;—all this, and more, in *one* day, or, if the two committees act in concert, and divide their labors between them, in *two* days. It is obviously impossible. Indeed, by a regulation of the School Committee, the Annual Examining Committee now confine their attention to the *first class* in each school. This regulation was found to be necessary, because, if the Examining Committees attempted to do more, they did nothing; but its effect has been to confine the labors of many masters quite too much to the first class.

These examiners are, by a long usage, new men every year, which makes anything like systematic and continuous observation out of the question; and the Reports of successive years show a discrepancy which we cannot otherwise explain.

Indeed, if any more proof is wanting of the utter inefficiency of the old mode of examination, we hope they who ask it, will look for it in a comparison of the Reports of the Annual Visiting Committees for different years. One committee will infer from an examination that a particular school is wanting in discipline, and its scholars deficient in a knowledge of geography, while they rank high in the other branches; another year, another committee report the order good, and the attainments in geography high, while in all the other studies the scholars are very deficient. Such discrepancies occur, for instance, between the successive reports of the Rev. Mr. Hague, and Mr. Hillard; and we mention these names, because these gentlemen are so well known in this community, that we may safely say, it is impossible for the School Committee to have their work done by better men.

The Reports are often at entire variance with each other, as would naturally be expected where men of different tastes, different capacities for examining schools, or in different frames of mind, examine the same school under different circumstances. Sometimes the mere state of the weather may have an effect, both upon the class and upon the committee man; a close and sultry afternoon, in midsummer, may render an examination tedious and unsatisfactory, which, in the clear, bracing air of morning, would have been lively and satisfactory to both parties.

Our citizens seem to have built up an extensive establishment of schools, to tax themselves annually for their support to the amount of more than two hundred thousand dollars, and then to leave them without anything like adequate or appropriate supervision. What other great interest of the city is so uncared for? What other great expenditure so unwatched? It is, we repeat, impossible that the present School Committee should perform this work of supervision. But while it constitutes, as in fact it does, the Board of Education for the city, and is therefore supposed to do this work, it protects and perpetuates defects, by preventing that personal examination by parents, which might, in some degree at least, be given, if it were supposed to be needed;—thus verifying the saying of Jeremy Bentham, in his argument in favor of individual responsibility, that a "Board" is but too apt to become a "Screen."

How, then, would we remedy this? Not by a change in the School Committee itself; for the constitution of this Board, for some purposes, is admirable. Its members come fresh from the people, every year; and being chosen from all the wards, they represent all the wants and interests which should be provided for, and all the opinions and feelings which should be consulted. The excellent elements for a Board of Education which we now possess, we would retain,—adding those which are wholly wanting; and these are, permanence, personal responsibility, continued and systematic labor. This we would do, by adding to the officers of the city, one whose duty it should be to watch over the schools; to know the exact condition of every one, in all particulars; to bring the lagging forward; to suffer no defects to become prescriptive, no abuses to be indurated by time; to acquire and to impart such information as shall bring all our schools to that degree of excellence which our citizens not only have a right to demand, but without which they have no right, in justice to themselves and to their children, to be satisfied. This should be his business,—his whole business; and he should be adequately paid. Although chosen annually, like our masters, his tenure of office, like theirs, would be permanent, if he discharged the duties of his office acceptably; and if he did not, another should be chosen in his stead. We think also that he should be chosen by the City Council, and be amenable in part to that body and in part to the School Committee, under a system of duties which can easily be arranged, when it shall be time to go into these details.

It is easy to bring a certain class of objections against this

measure. Many interests will be assailed and endangered by it, and therefore much influence will be exerted against it. The numerous objections which lie against all new propositions will of course be worked as hard as they will bear. Thus, it will be liable to abuse,—as if there was anything on earth that is not. It will add to our expenses; but it can be shown that the cost of such an officer can be saved many times over by the good he may do, and by the actual expenditure he may save. We are unwilling to enter into details on this subject, for they would carry us much too far. But there is one thing we would suggest. The cost of books lays now a heavy burthen upon many parents. A competent School Commissioner might have charge of a book depository. Contracts could easily be made, by which the books would be cheaper than they are, and they could be sold to scholars at their cost, or with only the slight addition necessary to pay the rent of a cheap room and the wages of a clerk. The Commissioner would also see that they were so manufactured as not to come to pieces quite as soon as at present; and a boy, who had taken care of his book, might, when he had done with it, leave it at the depository, and receive the half price paid by some scholar obliged to study economy. By these means alone, the Commissioner would save more than his salary, and he would save this money for those upon whom an unnecessary expense presses most heavily. But, it will be said, there may be favoritism, and management in the choice of masters to answer a particular purpose, and in the introduction of books to help somebody's pocket, and so forth and so forth. The answer is,—*there may be all this now.* In the one case we have a Board of twenty-four men, not paid for any labor, who share a responsibility, which, thus broken into fragments, presses on no one; and who must, on the common principles of human nature, be supposed to be made willing to hold this office by every variety of motive, from the highest and purest love of usefulness, down to a mere personal purpose of coining its privileges and opportunities into dollars and cents. In the proposed case, we have *one man*, paid, under contract, before the eyes of the public, regularly reporting everything that he does under his own name, and liable to lose his livelihood if he goes wrong. The question is,—and in fact it is the only question,—under which system are abuses least likely to creep in, and most likely to be detected and removed, when they have found an entrance? The experience of other great cities may help us to answer this question. In our peculiar organization we stand alone, and the important functions resting elsewhere upon a School Commissioner are by us very imperfectly provided for. It may be added, that such an officer might supply a link between the School Committee and the City Government, which is now wanting. For some purposes, the official presidency of the mayor would seem to form this connection, but in reality it does not. That officer is burdened with duties of very great amount and very great variety; and he can only go from one to the other, dividing his time and attention among them all.

Another defect in our schools, which operates upon them injuriously, is that which gives to each school two heads. There are in* each, one called a grammar master, who teaches grammar and certain other branches, and one called a writing master, who teaches writing and also some other branches. These two masters are both masters, and equal masters, with equal pay, no difference in rank or authority, neither having exclusive control or responsibility. It is certainly proper for those who respect the common sense of mankind, and the common usages of all time, to say that a system which is so distinctly opposed to both, is, upon the face of it, objectionable, and ought not to be retained, unless strong arguments, arising out of peculiar circumstances, justify it as an exceptional and peculiar arrangement. But there are no peculiar circumstances, and we know of no strong argument. This subject has been frequently and earnestly debated in the School Committee in times past; and perhaps most of the views of it which can be presented have been considered and discussed. We do not deny,—for it is certain and obvious,—that there must have been powerful motives, or interests, or influences, of some kind, which could have caused the adoption and continuance of so strange an arrangement; and they might have taken the appearance of strong reasons, or have given that appearance to weak ones. Of these we have nothing to say; and of the arguments in its favor, we can only remark, that we are wholly unable to perceive their force. Indeed, the only one which we have heard, of any weight, is this:—the departments of writing and arithmetic being very important, require that we should secure the most competent instructors, and we can do this only by giving to such instructors the same pay, and the same rank, and the same power, that we give to the grammar masters. Now, to say nothing of the contradiction of this argument by the notorious fact, that inferior men are very often chosen to this office, the argument itself is, in our estimation, very feeble. That writing and arithmetic should be taught just as well as they can be taught, we hold; and we hold this principle just as firmly as it can be held by any person. But we cannot see why either writing or arithmetic can be taught any better because the person who teaches them has just the same power, and just the same compensation, that another person has who teaches something else. Boston is not the only place in which the value of writing and arithmetic has been discovered; it is not the only place where these things are well taught; and we cannot see why it should be the only place where an opinion should prevail, that they cannot be well taught unless every school has two heads.† They should be well taught, and for that purpose we should give the instructors money enough, and authority enough, to secure competent persons, and enable them to do their work; and having done this, whatever we do

* There are two exceptions; the Smith School for colored children, and the school at East Boston. The new South School is not yet fully organized.

† A similar double-headed system was adopted in Salem for a time, but is now abandoned.

more, is without reason and against reason. If it be true, as only the School Committee of Boston ever supposed, that writing and arithmetic cannot be taught unless the teacher is head of the school, then let him be *the* head,—but not one head out of two. For if it be contended that there is a precise, mathematically exact equality between the branches which are taught by one of our masters and those taught by the other, that the equilibrium cannot be disturbed without violence, and that neither master can be the responsible head of the school without detriment and injustice,—we have only to say, it may be so, it may have been reserved for the School Committee of Boston to make and to apply this most singular discovery; but we are rather of opinion, that this wonderful equality is more apparent than real, and seems to exist only because the balance which weighs this matter does not turn quite so freely as might be desired.

But the positive and practical objections to this arrangement are very great. In the first place, *two* masters are *no* master; and it is strictly true, that there is *no* master in our grammar schools;—no master, who has the authority, who lies under the responsibility, who can perform the duties, and sustain the relations, and effect all the good results, which belong to the office of a schoolmaster. We hold this office in high respect; for we would respect every man in his own position, and in the discharge of his duties; and respect that position according to the value of those duties. And judging by this standard, who is entitled to more respect, to a more affectionate regard by the whole community, than the faithful and useful schoolmaster? But not merely because he teaches, from books or otherwise, certain branches of knowledge. This is the smallest thing he does, if he does all that he should, all that he may do. When Providence in its mercy gives us children, we receive from its hands these germs of human life, and with them the solemn duty of watching over them, of training them in their growth, and so preparing them in the morning of their lives for the hours of noonday toil, that the various uses and employments of life may be discharged by the men and women who are to follow us, in such wise as to promote their own good, and the good of mankind. We feel the burden of this task, and we call upon the schoolmaster to aid us; we tell him to stand in the place of the parent; we put in his hands a large part of our authority; we lay upon his shoulders a heavy portion of our own responsibility. Whoso enters our schoolrooms, and is able to see there only feebleness and imperfection, and the day of small things, forgets, or is incapable of knowing, that, in the immature and slight-seeming Present before him, there lies an infinite Future. There are the men and women of a time that is near at hand; there is the nation of the coming age. Within those walls are a large part,—no man can say how large,—of the influences that are to set their seal upon that nation, to form its character and determine its destiny. There is the beginning of education. And the end of it is not when as men and women they take their places in society; but afar off, in the distance

of eternity, these never-ending influences go on; and every step of their eternal progress is colored and qualified by this beginning.

It is in this respect, that the personal relations between the master and the child are of the utmost importance. If the child learns that he has a master, who is to be obeyed, whose every rule and every act are for his good; if he finds there kindness, firmness and *consistency*; if he knows that the experience of to-day will help him tomorrow, because he is under no change-ful domination; if he gradually,—always with some difficulty and after some conflicts,—learns to understand and acquiesce in the rule under which he lives, and to rejoice in it because it is kind, and well adapted to bring out and cultivate the good that is in him and make him happy, while its firmness and stability give him the feeling of security; and if habits of order, of intelligent self-government, of obedience in freedom, thus grow up in him,—then he is acquiring, what will be more useful in the coming ages, and after all coming ages, than all that was ever put between the covers of a book, even if he were able to put all that in his memory.

But how is it possible that relations like these should exist, in any good degree, where there is in fact *no* master; where the child is to-day under one government, and tomorrow under another, or rather passing from one to the other every half day; where the idea of unity has given way to that of diversity; and where, instead of unvarying consistency, there is only constant change? The two who are called masters must both feel this. Both may be good, and experienced, and intelligent; but if they are both men, each must be himself; each must have his own way of thinking, and feeling, and acting, and governing, if he have character enough to be fit for his place; and it is as impossible that the ways of the two should be one, as it is that two men should stand in one place. Both must feel this difficulty; and they must feel it as an insurmountable obstacle to the establishment of proper relations between themselves and the children under their joint care. And if the longing desire for that which every good schoolmaster must feel to be the greatest good of the school, should induce either of them to strive for this great end, the obvious impossibility of reaching it will come home to him every day, and compel him to desist. The school will quietly fall down to a low level, and there things will rest.

This must happen but too often, even if we suppose the most favorable case possible, and that is, the union in one school of two good masters, both desirous of acting upon their scholars by the highest motive-powers; but let us suppose what is far more likely to happen, what actually does happen,—the union of two masters of opposite characters, opposite views and opposite modes of government. In the morning, the grammar master comes in among his scholars, and commands their respect by those peculiar appearances which high moral worth, united with intellectual power, ever stamp upon the outer man. He wins their confidence and affection by his paternal solici-

tude, and his genial smile; he fixes their attention by presenting each subject of study in a new and interesting light; and he gradually fills the school with an atmosphere of love, which begins to subdue the most turbulent and refractory spirits. The children go away almost with a feeling of regret, and assemble again in the afternoon with hearts half softened towards authority; but what a change is there! The master is one who has mistaken his vocation; he may try to look as a master ought, but he cannot; the animal nature predominates in his composition, and he cannot suppress its natural language. It flashes from his eye, it speaks in every motion, and inspires distrust and dislike; he opens his mouth, and his harsh voice grates upon the ear, confirming the first impression; his directions assume, (involuntarily, perhaps,) the tone of command which will evidently be enforced by the physical power at hand. Human nature revolts at this, and thenceforward the boys are insensibly but certainly arrayed against the master; the beautiful harmony between the ingredients of the moral atmosphere of that school is broken by the invasion of base fear, and thenceforward discord reigns. The master becomes discontented and fretful; the boys become distrustful and hypocritical.

Now it is easy to see how the unwise conduct of the one master may counteract the kindly influence of the other, and, perhaps, drive him from his chosen system; but who can tell the effects which dwelling three hours every day in an atmosphere of fear, of hypocrisy and of eye-service, may have upon the tender minds of boys? We can calculate the effects upon the body, of an undue proportion of carbonic acid gas in the air; but who will tell the effects upon the character, of a vitiated moral atmosphere?

It is a fact of some significance in this connection, that the masters, as the schools are now organized, do not really have much to do with either the instruction or the discipline of the lower classes, and in most cases positively nothing to do with their moral training. Our schools are not only double-headed, but they are triple-headed,—if not quadruple-headed. Each of the masters is nominally the responsible head of his own department; but he confines his attention almost entirely to the upper class, and leaves his usher and his assistants to manage the lower as they can.

In some schools, the masters, in reply to the printed questions of the committee, say they have but sixty under their personal care; and it is a fact, beyond all question, that some of them do nothing, and know nothing about the instruction of the lower classes.

All nations, in all ages, have seen the great principle more or less clearly, that, in every school, there must be an acknowledged and responsible head. Hence, always and everywhere, under every form of government and every kind of civilization, the school has been a place where authority, discipline and order were to be found; and that kind of order which implies of necessity unity and consistency of government, and can exist

only where there is one master. The name *Master*, or one of exactly equivalent meaning, has been given to this office in all languages. We believe that this unity of government in schools has been almost a universal fact,* and is so at this moment, with the exception of our own city. The School Committee of Boston must have supposed that all states and nations, and all past ages, were in an error, which they alone had discovered and corrected. This is certainly possible; but it does not seem to us probable. On this question the School Committee may have been wiser than the whole world and the whole past, but we think not; and when the time shall come,—and it cannot be long delayed,—for us to adopt a system better conforming to universal usage, to common sense and obvious right, we have little doubt that experience will satisfy us or our successors that we have changed for the better.

Indeed, the result of our long and minute examination of our own schools, and those of other towns and states; the result of deep reflection and sober thought, is, that the school system of our own city is wrong in its principle, imperfect in its organization, inefficient in its operation, and productive of little good; in comparison with its very great expense.

Holding honestly this opinion, and believing that no half-way measures, no temporizing policy, nothing short of radical reform, will cure these evils, and enable the children of the city to receive a proportionate benefit from the large sums which the fathers of the city annually invest for them, we feel bound to suggest a plan so extensive in its nature and thorough in its operation, that we should have shrunk from the bare contemplation of it, three months ago, as many to whom it is addressed for the first time, will now shrink.

Most of the School Committee, and most of our fellow-citizens, have been so long accustomed to the present organization of our schools, that its extraordinary character does not, perhaps, strike them. Perhaps few have examined this organization, in comparison with that of other schools of high standing. Let us look at it, therefore, as though it were not our own. Take one of our boys' schools, for instance: here are 500 children, from seven up to fourteen or fifteen years of age, who are to be taught reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, &c. How do we divide them, and organize the school? We divide them by a perpendicular line, into two classes,—not according to age, not according to acquirement, but according to the principle of making two separate and independent schools, of equal age and acquirement, with two independent masters, each having equal jurisdiction;—one being master of one half all the morning, the other of the other half; and then exchanging in the afternoon. Thus in sixteen schools we have thirty-two independent rulers, each on a salary of \$1500, and sixteen vicegerents, or ushers, each upon a salary of \$600.

We have alluded, elsewhere, to some of the evils of this arrangement; many others may be seen by a close examina-

* The neighboring town of Charlestown furnishes the only other instance within our knowledge of strictly double-headed schools.

tion of the workings of our schools, of which the only ostensible benefit is, that it affords comfortable places and salaries for persons otherwise, perhaps, out of employment.

Now suppose, instead of this, that we should divide the scholars horizontally, or according to their age and acquirements,—placing the older or more advanced half in the upper room, and the other half in the lower room; the whole to be under the general care and superintendence of a head master, whose immediate sphere of duty, however, should be in the upper room, in the care and instruction of the older children. The lower room, with the younger children, should be under the care and instruction of a female teacher and her assistants; for all reason, and modern experience, show us that women are, by nature, better fitted than men to teach and train young children.

As it will be necessary to have a head master, of the highest character and acquirements, and as his responsibilities, both in and out of the school, would be greater than at present, the actual salary might be increased.

In order to secure the most capable and accomplished women for teachers in the junior department, it would be necessary to pay at least \$400 per annum; and thus we might keep at home those superior teachers who now go to the South and West to get higher salaries than they can get here.

By this simple and feasible plan we should obtain higher kinds of services and have better schools; while by substituting one lady for one master, and even *two* female assistants for one usher, we should save the salaries of sixteen masters at \$1500, and of sixteen ushers at \$600, being thirty-two persons, to whom we now pay \$33,600, and have in their place forty-eight competent female teachers, to whom we should pay only \$14,400; thus making a clear saving of \$19,200 per annum in the item of salaries, excepting only what might be allowed by way of increase of the masters' salaries.

Will any one venture the assertion that we cannot find women of energy enough to take care of and teach a school of boys under twelve years of age, with a head master in the same building, to be called upon in any emergency, in the face of the fact that, all over the civilized world, such things are done? Or in the face of the fact that at this moment, in our Boston schools, hundreds of boys are so managed? for we have said the head master usually leaves the management and care of the younger boys to his female assistants, and often knows not and cares not what she does with them.

Will any one venture the assertion that a grammar master cannot teach writing and arithmetic as well as the other branches, in face of the fact that all over this country, and in Europe, it is done? Or can this be said, in face of the specimens in writing, taken from the Dudley School in Roxbury, which are so decidedly superior to those of our own schools? Yet they are from a school taught by one master, and at much less expense than ours.

It may be said that this plan has been tried before in the

Boston schools, and failed ; but the fact is not so ; and even if it had been so, we trust that good influences would now be brought to support the plan, and sinister influences would be counteracted, so as to prevent its failure. The former feeble attempt at reform was made when great comparative ignorance and indifference about Public Schools pervaded the community, and when interested individuals exerted an influence which might now be palsied by a newly awakened public interest.

But the old attempt was not what is now proposed. That lowered the writing masters from their rank, and made of them mere subordinates, at a small salary ; and it thus introduced into the schools themselves a certain element of destruction. To expect schools to succeed in such hands, was to expect a miracle. That attempt failed mainly because a sense of duty to the public did not stifle the appeals for sympathy from a few individuals ; and because war was waged upon it by those who availed themselves of the ignorance and indifference of the public upon the subject, to work its destruction.

There was great clamor raised then, and there would be a great clamor raised now, should the committee entertain the present proposal, although it be simpler, more efficacious, and more economical ; for it is not possible to discontinue so many offices, even though they be supernumerary, without being disturbed by the protestations of thirty-two incumbents and their connections to the third and fourth generation, and their circles of friends.

If such a simple and demonstrable plan of saving fifteen or twenty thousand dollars annually, and yet having better schools, was ever defeated, we trust this could not be now done, in the face of accumulated knowledge, and reviving interest in the community.

Your committee have considered, not this plan only, but some others which have been from time to time suggested. But they present this only, because, after the fullest examination and deliberation, they are convinced that it is the best.

The attention of the School Committee and of the public has been directed of late to the subject of Corporal Punishment. There has been a strong desire to diminish this in amount, and put it under such regulations as may leave its usefulness unimpaired, and lessen its mischiefs. This is well ; but there is always danger in anything which partakes of the nature of reaction. It is easy to feel, and to excite, a morbid and mischievous sensibility on the subject of punishment. We are delighted with the beautiful instances of individual scholars, or of some excellent schools, where moral motives are all that are used, and all that are needed. But we must not forget, that upon this, as on all other practical subjects, the wise man aims at what is possible, and does not lose the good upon which he may lay his hand, in a vain effort after that which is unattainable. Nor must we forget, that if our schools are to be places where human beings shall be taught and trained, there must be discipline, restraint, and positive authority. He who hopes for an escape from this necessity, knows nothing of human nature.

He has not learned the most universal law of human life, who does not know that every man, from his cradle to his grave, errs and sins, and suffers the punishments by which Providence would restrain, instruct and reform him. It is thus the man learns, and so must the child learn to become a man. Doubtless, moral motives are infinitely higher than merely sensual motives; and for that very reason they are less adapted for some masters to use, and some scholars to feel. Nor is the effort to substitute the one for the other without its danger. A blow with a ferule may give less pain, and do a far less permanent injury, than an exposure to disgrace, or an appeal to self-esteem and the love of approbation; for these may crush one kind of temper, and excite in another and make habitual, feelings that will render it selfish, useless and miserable. It is still true, however, that moral motives are far higher than those appealed to through the sense of bodily pain; and it may well be the earnest endeavor of the committee and of the schoolmasters, to bring down corporal punishment to its minimum, and enlarge as far as may be the domain of moral discipline. But if all perceive the propriety of doing this, and all aim to do this, their success will be very different. Experience shows that there are masters who *know how* to dispense with the rod, and others who do not; and that those who possess this knowledge are generally, in other respects, most successful as teachers.

We are forced to believe that there has been a gross abuse of the power of corporal punishment; but in consequence of the late order of the committee, and of the direction of public attention to this subject, the abuse is much diminished. There is little danger of its revival, nor is there, in the actual condition of our schools, in this respect, anything to call for, or justify alarm or excitement. There is room for improvement; but that improvement can only be effected by temperate and just opinions, deliberately formed, resting upon a clear understanding of facts and possibilities, and contented to advance slowly, or what may seem slowly to the enthusiastic. Undoubtedly there are some persons who look upon the rod as if it had a magic power; as if chaos must come again, if it were abandoned or forgotten. They quote the saying of Solomon, as if it contained all his wisdom, and regard the rod as if it must ever be the chief instrument of education. Possibly there may be some persons in our own schools whose minds are inclined too much in this direction; but the regulations of the committee, and the power of public opinion, will, we hope, break the force of the blows, and save the little victims from outrage. If we have such persons among our masters, we would not turn them away, if they are good men and good masters in other respects, and are restrained by any means or motives from doing too much "execution" in their schools. At least, we would not send them away until we had given them the fullest opportunity for reform and improvement. We would let them stay, and hope they would become wiser; nor would we content ourselves with merely hoping, for we would try to help them.

We have spoken of this subject, not only because it happens

just now to receive much attention, but because it is itself of the utmost importance. And while we do not propose, nor deem it our duty, to go into a full consideration of this interesting topic under all its aspects, we ask permission to state one other view of it which has much weight with us. It is that which regards corporal punishment, as peculiarly unsuited to our own schools, and to a system of education for this country. In Prussia, for example, where it is, however, almost disused, if the child, from its cradle, were taught to obey and to be good, only by the constant terror of immediate corporal punishment, the habits of mind and of character which would be formed in this way, would be well suited to the influences and circumstances that would surround him when he went forth to the duties and employments of adult life. There, too, he finds a master over him, and a master who holds a heavy rod in a hand always uplifted. He is still subjected to laws which he did not help to make, which he needs not reason about, to which he must yield a blind and unreflecting obedience, because they have the power to compel this obedience by prompt and certain punishment.

In this country, when the boy escapes from school, he never hears the word *Master* again. He is free; free for good or for evil. He sends his neighbor, or goes himself, to make all the laws which bind him; and if he does not like them, it is right for him to say so, and to use proper means to effect their change or repeal. Unless he sinks down to absolute crime, he scarcely comes in contact with penal law, or knows what legal restraint means. Nine tenths of the lives of nine tenths of our citizens are passed with no sense whatever of coercion or compulsion, beyond that which may come from social usages, or their own sense of interest or right; and what must be the condition of him who comes into such a life as this, with no habit and no idea of self-government, beyond that which he could derive from corporal punishment? The great end of the education of a child, is to fit him to become a man; and so far as this end is concerned, *his* education has utterly failed. He must begin now, when the impressible years of childhood are passed, to learn all that is most necessary for him to know; and under what influences, what temptations! A man who knew that his child was destined to an occupation, in which he could earn his bread only by the use of his right hand; if, during his whole childhood, he bound that hand to his body, and permitted every other limb to grow and strengthen, would act wisely, in comparison with the parent or schoolmaster who seeks to prepare a child to become an American citizen, by no better discipline than that of corporal punishment.

We are, indeed, willing to confess that we dislike the habitual use of corporal punishment, for many reasons, but we object to it principally because it is addressed to that kind of fear, which is not only not curative in its nature, but is degrading. It may keep boys still, it may make them obey; but it never makes them esteem order; it never makes them really respect authority; it never makes them love him who imposes it.

We have referred principally to the habitual use of corporal punishment in our boys' schools; for we are ready to say of him, who, in this age and city, avows that he cannot teach our girls without resort to blows, that if he cannot so use the respect, the docility, and the affectionate temper, which characterize the many, as to subdue the perversity of the few, he is not yet fit for the high vocation of teacher.

We cannot but think that the endeavor to avoid corporal punishment in our schools, would induce our masters to resort to other powers for the maintenance of order; and, as the change would be under the awakened attention of the community and of the committee, it could hardly fail to be an appeal to higher motives. We shall not suggest any method to be adopted, but content ourselves with making a few further remarks upon the present or rather the passing system.

It will be found upon examination that, in most of the cases where severe injury has followed corporal punishment in our schools, the offence was very trifling, and no great severity intended when the master began to strike. Moreover, it is beyond all question that in the majority of the cases of corporal punishment and other kinds of punishment in our schools, it is inflicted for violations of arbitrary rules of discipline,—for whispering, for disorderly conduct, arising perhaps from mere physical uneasiness,—and it is equally certain that the fault, in most cases, is as much that of the school, as of the scholar. Whoever will go into our schools at any hour of the day, will find a large portion of the scholars unoccupied by any study; they may have a book before them, but as its contents are insipid, or perhaps incomprehensible, yet nevertheless to be committed to memory, and as there is no master immediately over them, they do not study. Now, to expect boys full of young life and pent-up vigor, to remain motionless, like soldiers upon duty, is to expect that which is impossible; oftentimes the best boys,—the boys who will make the ablest and best men,—will manifest their uneasiness in a way to bring down a punishment. We say that in such cases the fault is as much that of the school, as of the scholar; and, as a general rule, when children, under ordinary circumstances, are idle, or disorderly in school, we hold this fact to be *prima facie* evidence, either of incapacity in the master, or of faulty organization of the school;—there are too many in the class; or they are retained too long at one study; or the air of the school is vitiated; or the seats are irksome; or the mode of instruction is bad;—something is wrong.

[To be continued.]

MRS. ELLIS, in her "Daughters of England," says: "A countenance habitually under the influence of amiable feelings, acquires a beauty of the highest order, from the frequency with which such feelings are the originating cause of the movements or expressions which stamp their character upon it."

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